

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL
MEETING MINUTES

Date: December 3, 2015

Project: Canton Crossing

Developer: COPT

Architect: ELKUS | MANFREDI ARCHITECTS

Meeting No.: 217

Phase: Continued Master Plan

Location: Northwest Harbor, Boston and S. Clinton Streets

PRESENTATION:

John Martin, AIA, LEED AP, principal at ELKUS | MANFREDI Architects re-introduced the project parameters, goals, context and site influences. Mr. Martin also shared data on the current approved PUD zoning and on the new proposed plan. He noted that the project design had evolved since the prior Master Plan Review in response to UDARP comments from the October 1, 2015 review meeting. Key points that are addressed include:

1. 6 Development Principles with accompanying diagrams
 - a. Extend, enhance and activate the harborwalk, while creating pedestrian access and opening view corridors to the harbor
 - b. Develop streets and squares that reinforce historic neighborhood precedents
 - c. Create a dynamic, active live-work-play precinct with a synergistic mix of uses including offices, hotel, retail and residential components
 - * The design team restated that there is a deed restriction on residential use that will need to be removed.
 - d. Park once, and provide discreet service areas
 - e. Committed to sustainable architecture and landscape design suitable for waterfront development
 - f. Privately owned (and maintained) public space provides indoor and outdoor amenity space for tenants and for the neighborhood
2. Specific site plan modifications include:
 - a. Sliding the retail pavilions southward along the waterfront, and opening the view and access from the harborwalk into the town green
 - b. Moving the north plaza retail pavilion to the south side of the plaza
 - c. Opening up the view corridor and access to the harbor from the Care First Tower, through Building C, across the plaza, and between the waterfront retail pavilions
 - d. The design team walked through digital massing models of views around the master plan.
 - e. The current plan indicates single story “marina offices” as a riparian use on the proposed pier in lieu of previously shown multi-story mixed use.
 - * The pier has not yet been vetted with the Army Corps of Engineers or other state or local agencies with jurisdiction.
 - f. Street section at S. Clinton Avenue provides for a 13’ sidewalk on the west adjacent to the CareFirst Tower, 7’ for parallel parking on each side of the street within a 44’

- right of way, and street trees and rain garden within a 20' pedestrian zone on the east site of the street adjacent to Building C.
- g. Site and "detailed" sections indicates site lines of the top of the CareFirst Tower will remain visible over Building C from the harborwalk and the woonerf.
 - h. The Town Square includes both open green lawn space, the woonerf parallel to the harborwalk with special paving to slow auto movements and provide a pedestrian-friendly environment. The woonerf, possible parking for food trucks and farmers' market, and broad extent of special paving on Wharf and South Streets have been curtailed.
 - i. The design team presented precedents for the pavilions, also noting that the roofs of the pavilions may be green or high albedo if flat, or other material if roof(s) are pitched or shaped. Pavilions are sized with approximately 5 – 6,000 SF footprints, which are more likely to succeed for small to mid-sized users. The 40' height leaves open the possibility for a 2nd floor or for a mezzanine.
 - j. A zoning envelope diagram includes a portion of E1 block that reaches 400', which is 80' taller than the top of the CareFirst Tower. Pavilions and riparian rights (note that this is inconsistent with the area tabulations) buildings are capped at 40'. E5 (Building C) is capped at 130'. E2 is 170', and E6 and 7 are capped at 250'.
 - k. The proposed PUD areas are summarized in a tabulation. Total development under the new PUD will increase across all typologies, generally between 30 and 40%.
3. Following masterplan approval, COPT intends to construct an eight story office and retail project - Building C.
 4. No phasing plan has been presented. Extent and timing of private/public space improvements will be vetted in detail as the project progresses.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PANEL:

The panel was generally complimentary of the updates proposed by the architect for the project. Specific panel comments included:

1. The panel re-emphasized that this is the final destination of the promenade due to the nature of uses immediately south of the master planned area. The panel praised the team for improving the connection at the northwest corner, and for providing a direct line of site from the CareFirst Tower through Building C, between the waterfront retail pavilions and to the water.
2. Street wall and public areas appear to be well defined with a 70' street edge, then setbacks to taller portions of the buildings.
3. The panel remains concerned about the design and servicing of the pavilions. Food oriented uses, e.g. restaurants, will require up to 50% of the floor area for service and food preparation. Trash removal, HVAC and other services must also be skillfully considered. The panel recommends strong design criteria to be vetted with the panel at a future date.
4. The proposal asks for significant additional density. The panel noted that the privately owned and maintained publicly accessible space, particularly at the Town Green is filled with retail pavilions, and seems relatively small in consideration of the density of the site. The panel recommends additional study of the town green, number of pavilions, and stronger connection to the water.

5. The panel recommends reintroducing special street paving and creation of opportunities for street vendors, e.g. food trucks, and farmers' market operations along both South and Wharf Streets as shown in earlier design iterations.
6. Though not conclusive, the panel asked the development team to further consider relationship of retail pavilions relative to water's edge, both north and south, and tightness to the promenade. The panel expects more clear sectional information related to water, promenade, pavilions and terraces during future design presentations.
7. Development on a pier is an assumption. Presently, development on piers is limited to only water-dependent uses. What is shown is presently non-compliant with pier development. The Developer will be responsible for following-up with appropriate Federal, State, and City Agencies to investigate the potential for pier development and any process that might result from that request. This is a critical element of the master plan; the developer must present findings about the possibilities for the pier.
8. Residential development within the proposed north block is still an assumption, and in the panel's view, critical to the success of an integrated mixed use development. Current Deed restrictions prevent development of residential units within this area. The Developer must follow-up with appropriate Federal, State, and City Agencies to and report on the potential for residential development here, and what path they are taking to ensure its viability.
9. Phasing of the project is not yet clear. The panel recommends that the development team work with planning staff to develop a cohesive plan with Town Square, woonerf, and harborwalk slated for early implementation.

PANEL ACTION:

The panel recommends approval of the Master Plan with further study of critical elements noted above, immediate work with staff on phasing, and progress on both pier and on lifting residential use deed restrictions. The panel looks forward to additional design refinement and discussion in response to comments as the project progresses through individual component review.

Attending:

Caroline Hecker- RMG
Wayne Lingafelter, Dean Lopez – COPT
Andrew Goetze, John Martin – Elkus Manfredi
Paul Taylor- BC R+P
Blaine Linkous - WBCM

UDARP Panel Members – Ms. Pavlina Ilieva, Messrs. Gary Bowden, Rich Burns, David Rubin, and David Haresign*

Planning Department- Tom Stosur and Christina Hartsfield